

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Ukrainians and key left figures launch successful campaign to drop Ukraine's debt

- With a national debt burden of over \$94 billion, Ukraine is resisting the Russian invasion with one hand tied behind its back.
- Campaigners demanded that the UK government uses its influence in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to cancel Ukraine's national debt.
- After an urgent question raised by Caroline Lucas MP, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs **Liz Truss agreed in principle to the demand.**

Another Europe Is Possible jointly with Ukrainian peace activists and a number of MPs launched a successful campaign for the urgent cancellation of Ukraine's national debt.

The campaign includes an online 'Write to Your MP' tool which thousands of constituents have already used. The letter petitions MPs to ask the UK government to demand the cancellation of Ukraine's national debt. (The 'Write to Your MP' tool can be accessed [here](#)).

After Caroline Lucas MP raised an urgent question demanding the cancellation of Ukraine's National Debt, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, Liz Truss, appeared to support the principle of Ukraine debt cancellation. The full video of Caroline Lucas MP's intervention can be [viewed here](#).

Campaigners welcome the UK government's response. They will now be watching the government's actions closely to ensure that it delivers on substance. We need an agreement with international partners to cancel the debt. We need to put money on the table: grants, not loans, to support Ukraine.

The campaign is arguing for:

- The UK to work with international partners to cancel the Ukrainian debt. The country will face huge reconstruction costs after the war and cannot be asked to carry this burden.
- Aid not loans. Resources for Ukraine should be supplied on a non-commercial basis. The Mutual Aid Agreement struck by the allies in WW2 could be a model for this.
- The UK to raise this urgently on the Executive Board of the IMF and seek a multi-party international fundraising conference to support Ukraine.

#### **Caroline Lucas MP said:**

"Ukraine's national debt is crippling. As war drags on and the costs of reconstruction mount ever higher, we cannot leave Ukrainians alone to bear the financial brunt.

The UK can offer genuine support to Ukrainians by joining with our international allies to cancel Ukraine's national debt immediately. Aid, not loans, must be provided to Ukraine on a non-commercial basis. We must stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people."

**Clive Lewis MP said:**

“Conservative MPs have loudly proclaimed their support for Ukraine against Russia’s invasion. Yet one of the simplest things they could do is call for Ukraine’s immense national debt to be dropped.

Through the International Monetary Fund, the UK and Western countries have the power to cancel large amounts of Ukraine’s \$94 billion debt. Instead Ukraine, one of Europe’s poorest countries, is expected to defend itself against Russian aggression with its hands tied behind its back. Ukraine’s national debt must be cancelled now.”

**Oleksandra Matviychuk, Head of the Centre for Civil Liberties, said:**

"The international community must be firm in its commitment to Ukrainian sovereignty, the protection of human rights and democratic values. Debt cancellation must form part of an urgent package of economic measures to support our legitimate and democratic government and oppose Putin's deadly campaign against the people of Ukraine."

**Olga Aivazovska, Chair of the Civil Network OPORA, said:**

“Putin's goal is to destroy a sovereign Ukraine and its people who are not ready to submit to a dictator, as the Russians did. Britain's assistance in defending our country, its financial stability, and recovery, in the long run, will be a worthy strategic investment. The 21st century deserves to be peaceful.”

**Mary Kaldor, Professor of Global Governance a LSE said:**

“The Ukrainian resistance to Putin’s brutal invasion is astonishing. It needs all the help it can get. Financial support is crucial and that should include debt cancellation so that Ukraine is not burdened with debt servicing and with financial conditionality now and in the future.”

**Luke Cooper, Another Europe Is Possible National Committee said:**

"We are pleased that the UK government has indicated that it recognises Ukraine needs debt cancellation and urgent economic aid. But the devil is in the detail. We need the UK chancellor to put money on the table and push our international partners in the same direction. Ukraine cannot wait."

NOTES

1. For more information ring Seema Syeda on 07850 219662 or email [info@another europe.org](mailto:info@another europe.org)
2. As explained in [this Brexit Spotlight article](#), Russian military intervention in and after 2014 increased Ukraine’s debt problem. This was then exploited by creditors including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who demanded further privatisation and deregulation (especially in the [energy market](#)).

While the West in recent years has moved away from 'free market' ideology towards managed trade and greater state intervention, indebted countries such as Ukraine are still having the 'old' economics imposed on them through World Bank and IMF debt restructuring programmes.

Especially at a time of pandemic and military invasion, these policies are devastating and inhumane.

Western states have a voting majority in the IMF – and the combined weight of the UK and US alone together comprise over a fifth of the body's votes. It is well within the power of the West to immediately cancel a large part of Ukraine's debt in the face of these extraordinary events.

3. The full text of the 'Write to Your MP tool' can be found here:

<https://www.anothereurope.org/mp-write/ukraine-debt/>

SUPPORT UKRAINE: DROP THE DEBT

*"This is urgent. My country, one of the poorest in Europe, is under attack from Putin's murderous regime. We need the support of the international community urgently. I am asking you to write to your MP right now to demand the cancellation of Ukraine's national debt.*

*"These debts are crippling and we need urgent economic support. Please take a moment to raise this vital issue with your MP."*

- Yuliya Yurchenko, Ukraine Solidarity Campaign and academic at Greenwich University

Send this message to your MP:

We have all looked in horror at Putin's appalling invasion of Ukraine. I am pleased that voices across UK politics have united in agreement that we should support Ukrainian civil society and the country's democratically elected government at this truly dark moment for humanity.

Ukraine needs urgent solidarity from the international community.

Even in normal circumstances Ukraine is living with a terrible debt burden. In 2020, its national debt stood at around \$94 billion and the country is already subject to an International Monetary Fund financing agreement. Ukraine is clearly not in anything like a 'normal' situation and requires sweeping debt cancellation, immediate economic aid and humanitarian assistance.

I am writing to ask you to urgently raise with the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs the need for:

- The UK to work with international partners to cancel the Ukrainian debt. The country will face huge reconstruction costs after the war and cannot be asked to carry this burden.
- Aid not loans. Resources for Ukraine should be supplied on a non-commercial basis. The Mutual Aid Agreement struck by the allies in WW2 could be a model for this.

- The UK to raise this urgently on the Executive Board of the IMF and seek a multi-party international fundraising conference to support Ukraine.

I hope you understand the urgency of this matter and will raise it immediately with the UK government.

ENDS